



NCE UPON A TIME AT THE END OF THE WORLD™

JASON AARON

ALEXANDRE TEFENKGI

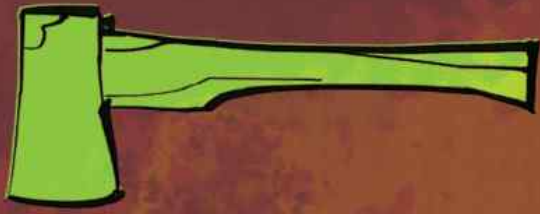
LEE LOUGHRIDGE

WITH NICK DRAGOTTA AND RICO RENZI



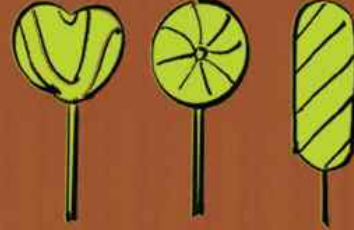
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BOOM!
STUDIOS



BOOK ONE

**LOVE IN THE
WASTELAND**



CHAPTER FIVE

**THE
APOCALYMPICS**

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PAGES TWENTY-SEVEN THROUGH THIRTY

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MIKE ALLRED
TERRY AND RACHEL DODSON**

**WHATNOT EXCLUSIVE
VARIANT COVER BY
KEYLA VALERIO**





THE
APOCALYMPICS.
THIS IS WHAT YOU
ASKED FOR.

I DID?

YOU SAID
THE WORDS FROM
THE BOOK, "THE
WASTELAND MUST
DECIDE." AND SO
IT SHALL.



YOU WILL COMPETE AGAINST MY RANGERS IN
A SERIES OF **CHALLENGES**, TO TEST ONE'S
WASTELAND SURVIVAL SKILLS AND
RELEVANT KNOWLEDGE.

OH.
OKAY.

WIN AND
YOU GO FREE.
LOSE...AND--



STOP. DON'T BOTHER TELLING
ME WHAT HAPPENS IF I LOSE.
BECAUSE...BECAUSE THAT'S
NOT HAPPENING.

I'VE SPENT MONTHS
CROSSING THE WASTELAND
WITH THE **GREATEST**
RANGER IN THE WORLD.
AND **MEZZY**...SHE TAUGHT
ME **EVERYTHING**
SHE KNOWS.



SO
THIS IS FOR
MEZZY!

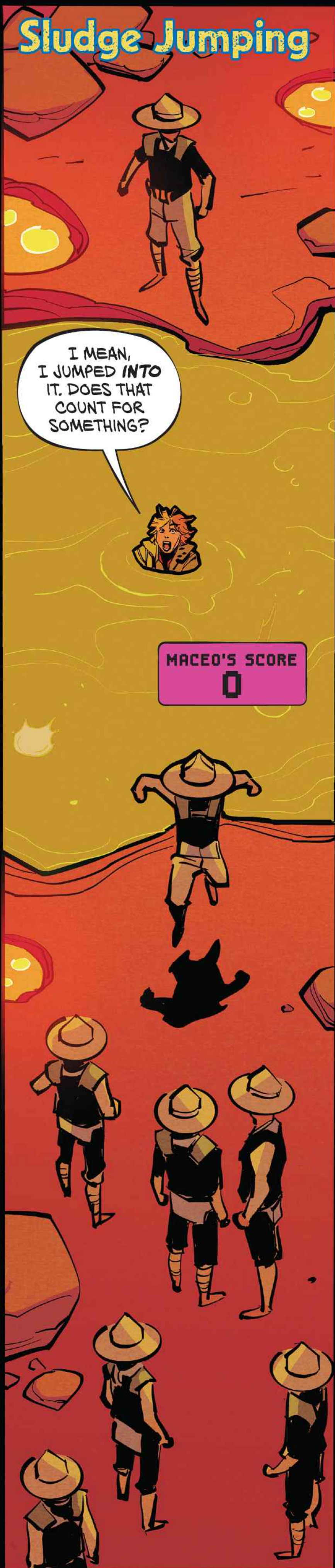
THIS...THIS
IS FOR MY
TOWER!

FOR MY
PARENTS!

BRING ON YOUR
STUPID CHALLENGES,
LADY! BECAUSE I'M
TELLING YOU RIGHT NOW...
AFTER EVERYTHING
I'VE BEEN
THROUGH...

...NOT
ONE OF YOUR
RANGERS STANDS A
CHANCE AGAINST **ME!**

Sludge Jumping



BUG EATING



RAT KILLING



DISTANCE SPITTING

MACEO'S SCORE

0



MAN-ROARING!!!

AHEM. LET
ME JUST...CLEAR
THIS FROG IN MY
THROAT...

SO...WHAT
EXACTLY IS OUR
MOTIVATION
FOR--

MACEO'S SCORE

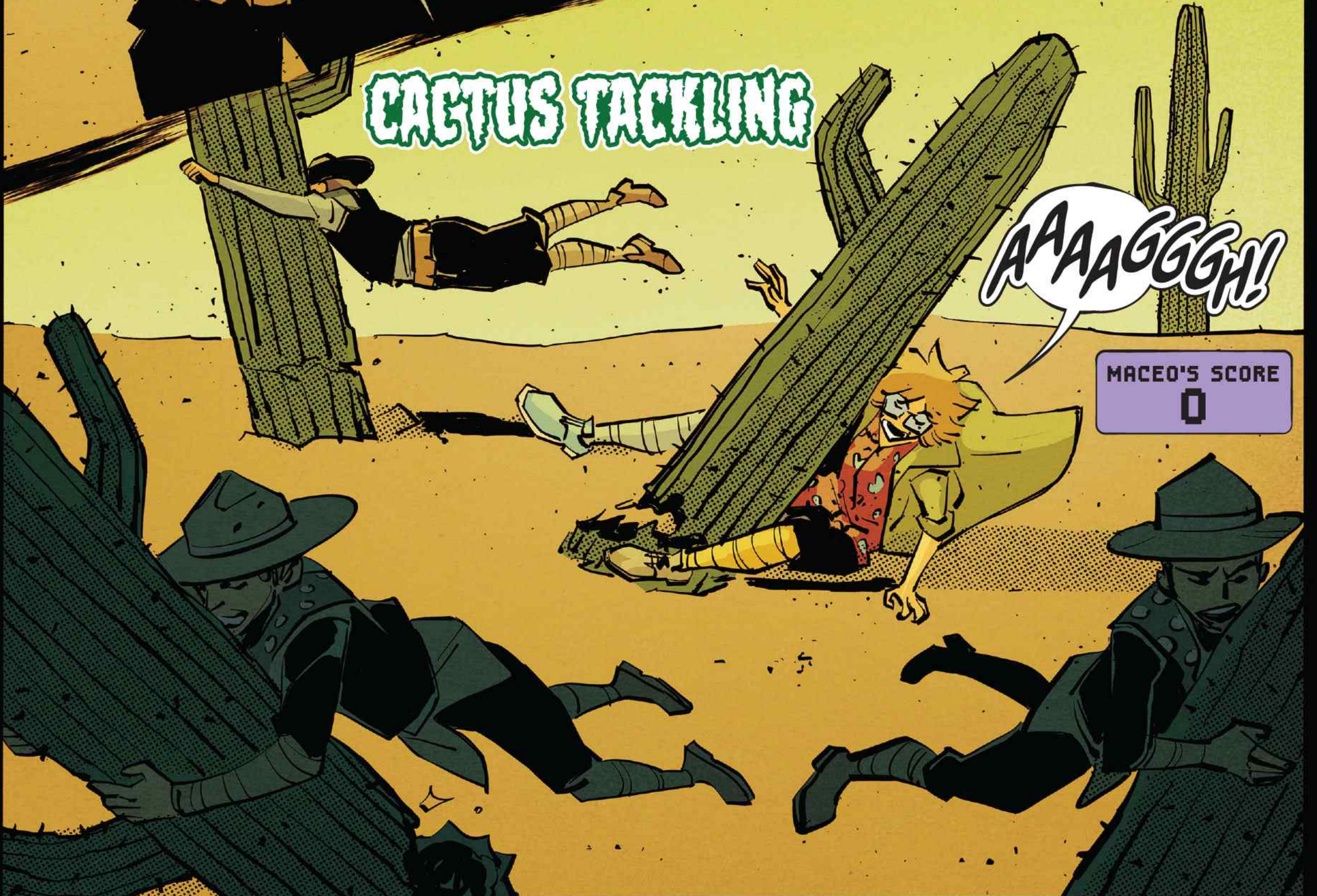
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CACTUS TACKLING

AAAAGGGH!

MACEO'S SCORE

0



TRIATHLON:

RUNNING, KNIFING, PRAYING

AAGH!

AAGH!

AAGH!

MACEO'S SCORE
0

Sexual Disregard

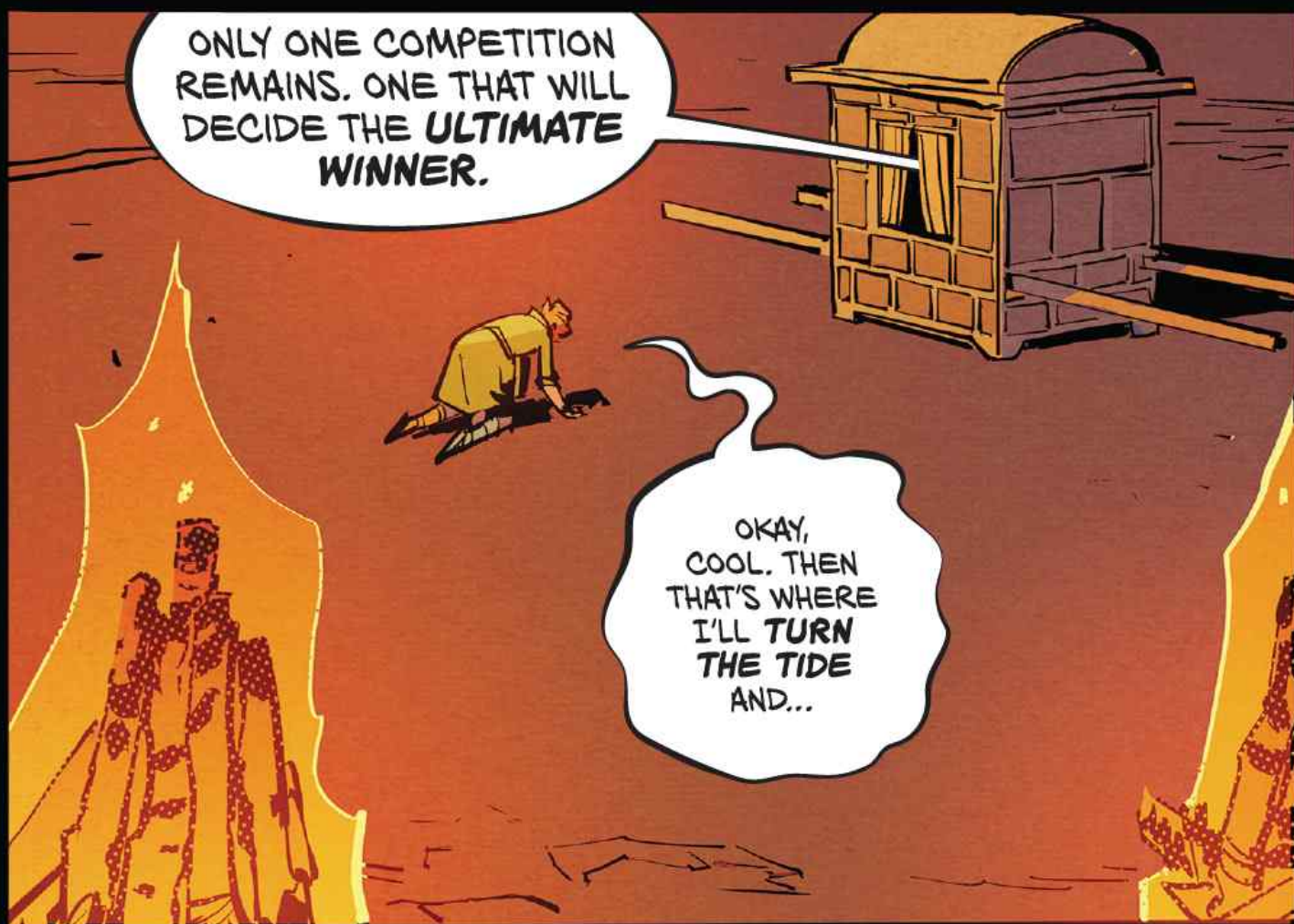
WELL,
ACTUALLY I READ
A BOOK ABOUT THIS,
SO YES, I DO KNOW
WHERE THE
CLITORIS IS
LOCATED.

MACEO'S SCORE
0

GOLF

MACEO'S SCORE

QUADRUPLE QUINTUPLE BOGEY

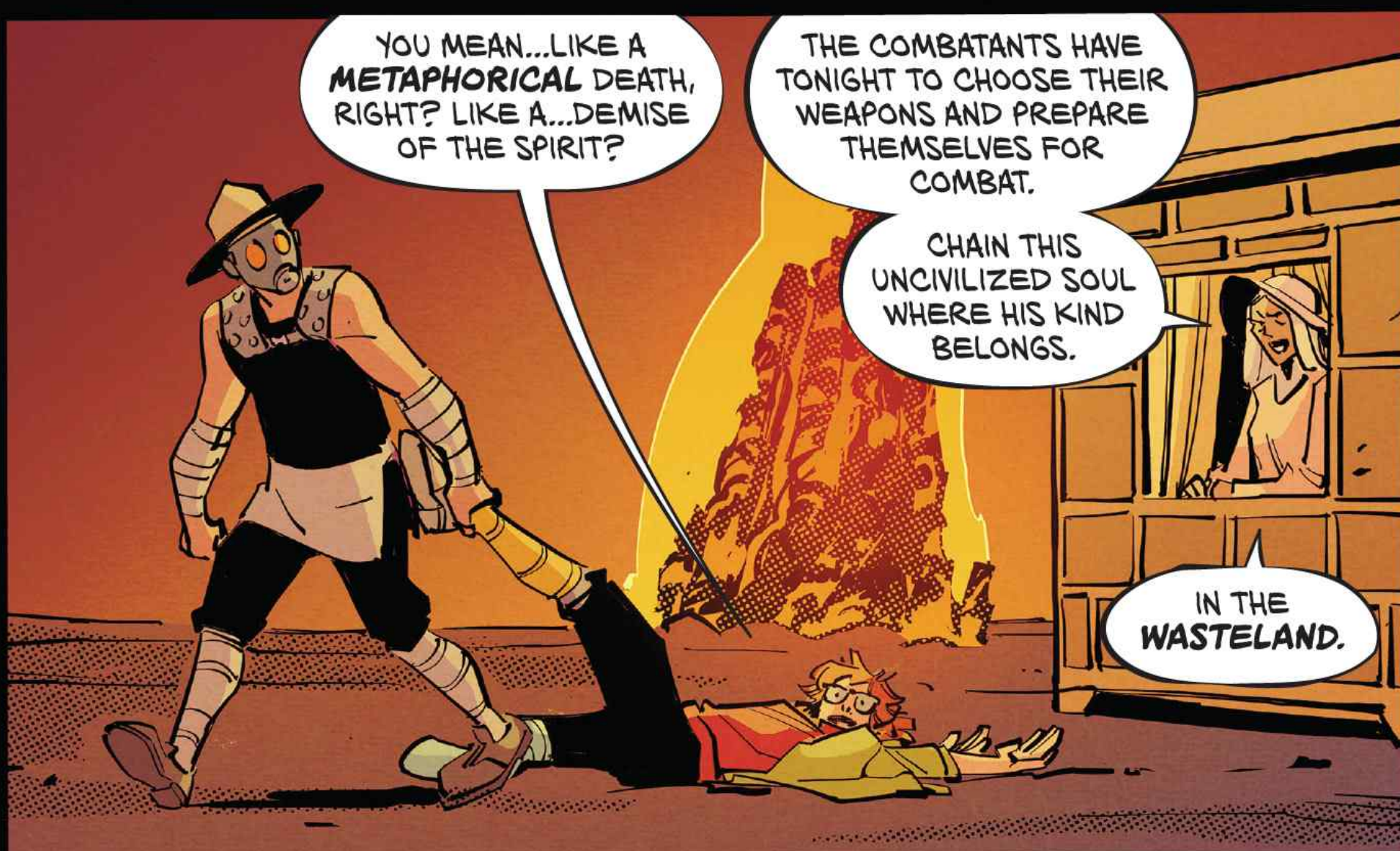


ONLY ONE COMPETITION REMAINS. ONE THAT WILL DECIDE THE **ULTIMATE WINNER**.

OKAY, COOL. THEN THAT'S WHERE I'LL **TURN THE TIDE** AND...



THE FINAL COMPETITION IS A BATTLE TO THE **DEATH**.



YOU MEAN...LIKE A **METAPHORICAL** DEATH, RIGHT? LIKE A...DEMISE OF THE SPIRIT?

THE COMBATANTS HAVE TONIGHT TO CHOOSE THEIR WEAPONS AND PREPARE THEMSELVES FOR COMBAT.

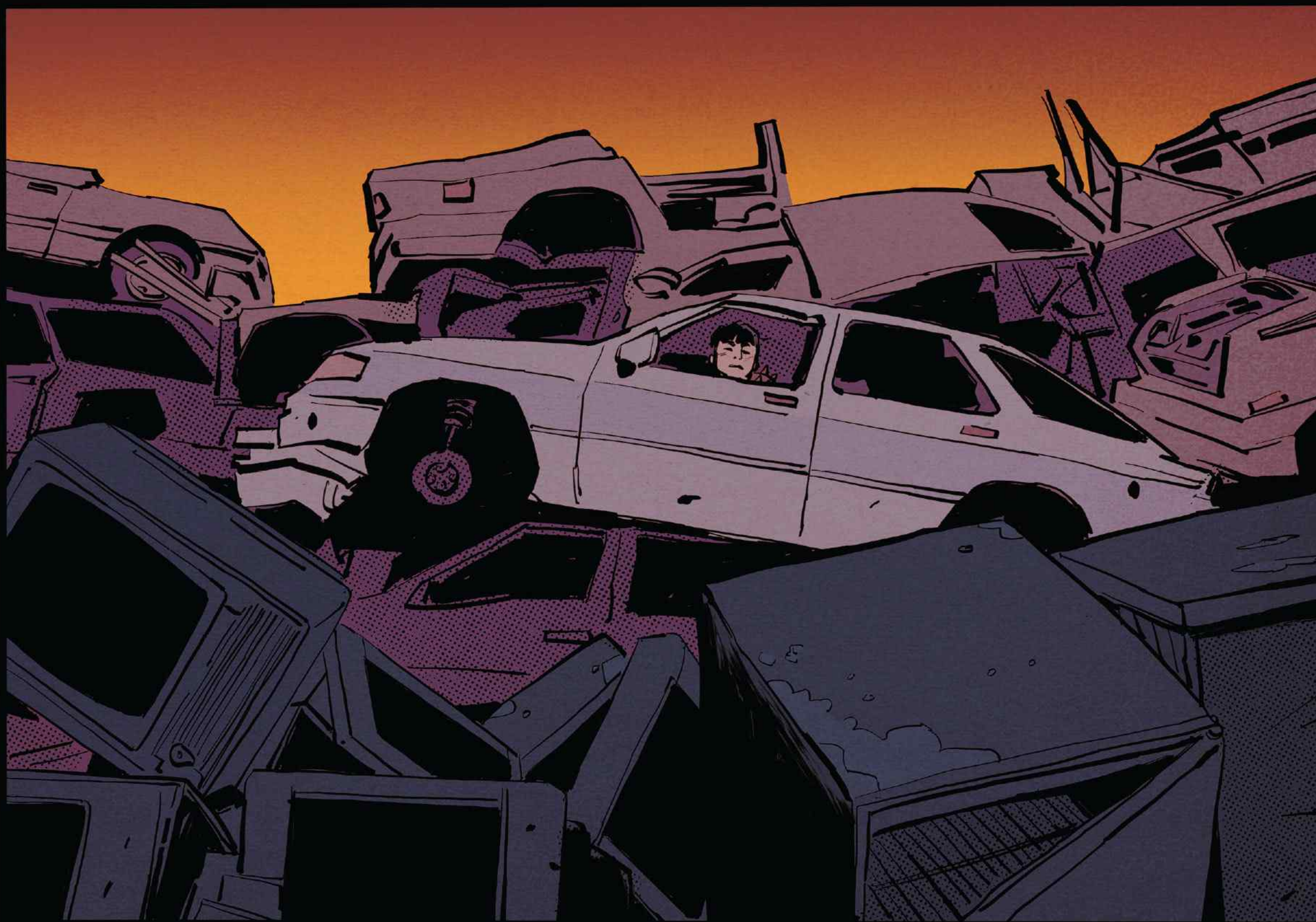
CHAIN THIS UNCIVILIZED SOUL WHERE HIS KIND BELONGS.

IN THE **WASTELAND**.



AND MAY HIS BLOOD BRING THE WORLD SALVATION.

MAY IT BRING US OUR **EZMERELDA**.







WE'RE
GETTING
YOU OUTTA
HERE.

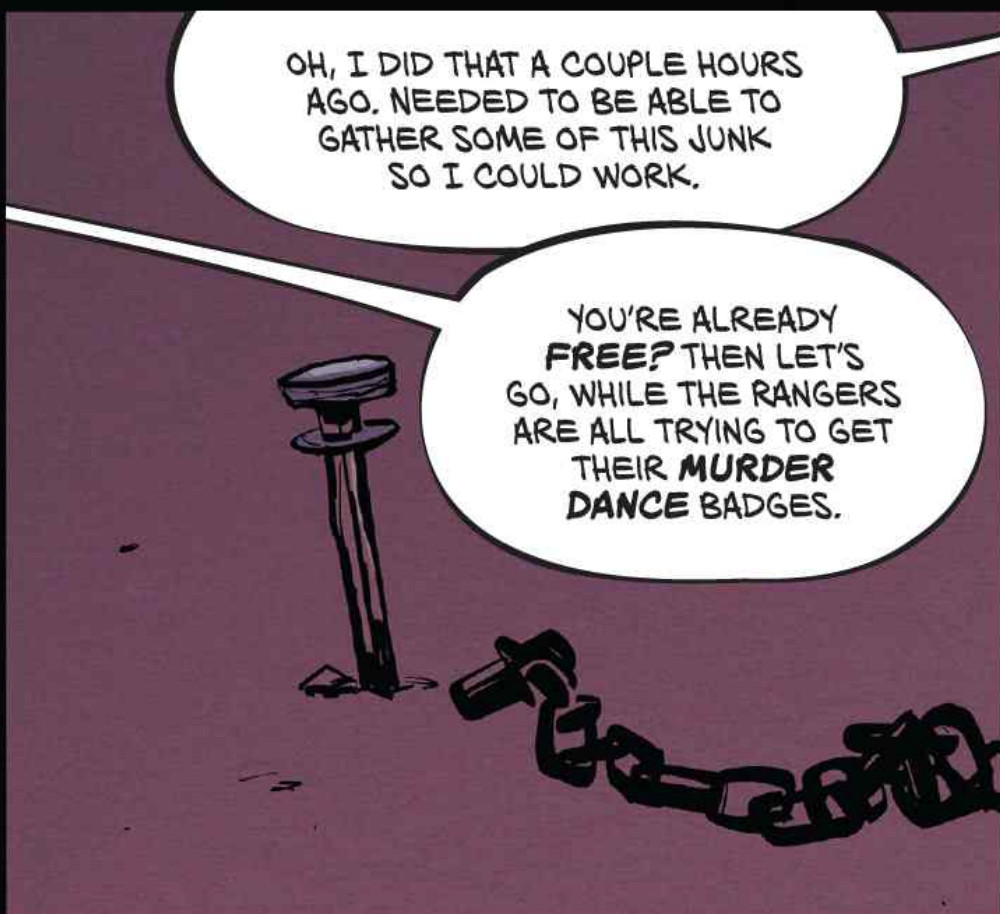


MEZZY!

QUIET.

MEZZY. I
CAN'T BELIEVE
YOU CAME
BACK.

NO
TIME. WE'VE
GOTTA GET YOU
OUTTA THOSE
CHAINS.



OH, I DID THAT A COUPLE HOURS
AGO. NEEDED TO BE ABLE TO
GATHER SOME OF THIS JUNK
SO I COULD WORK.

YOU'RE ALREADY
FREE? THEN LET'S
GO, WHILE THE RANGERS
ARE ALL TRYING TO GET
THEIR **MURDER**
DANCE BADGES.



MEZZY...
I'M NOT
LEAVING.

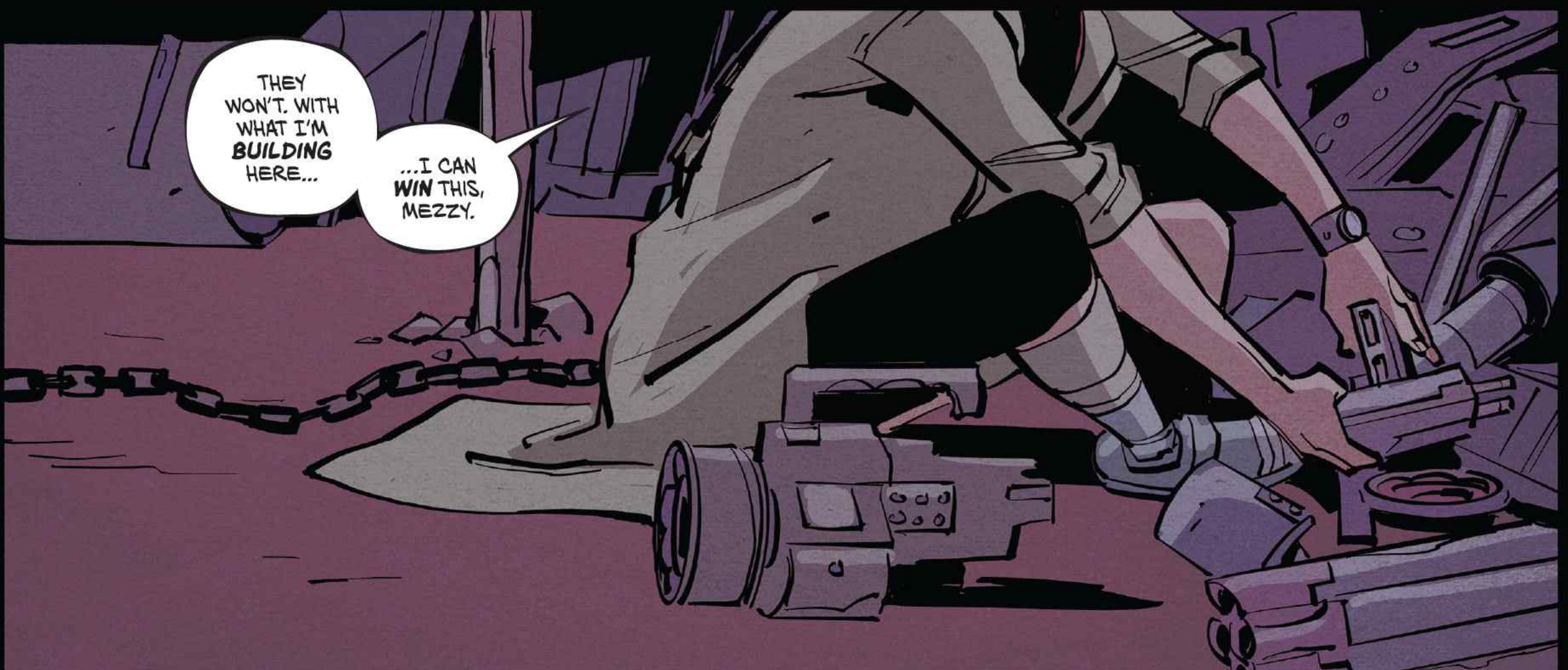


YOU'VE
LOST YOUR
MIND.

NO,
I'M PRETTY
SURE THAT'S
ALL I'VE GOT
LEFT.

I **HAVE**
TO FINISH
THIS.

FINISH **DYING**
OUT THERE? MACEO,
THERE'S NO MORE GOLF
AND BUG-EATING. ALL
THAT'S LEFT IS FOR
THE RANGERS TO
KILL YOU.



THEY
WON'T. WITH
WHAT I'M
BUILDING
HERE...

...I CAN
WIN THIS,
MEZZY.



WIN THIS? IT'S
A BATTLE TO THE
DEATH, MACEO.
EITHER YOURS
OR THEIRS.

I KNOW
WHAT IT IS.

THIS ISN'T
SOME **BOOM**
PIT HIGH IN YOUR
TOWER, WHERE THE
MONSTERS ARE
FAR BELOW.

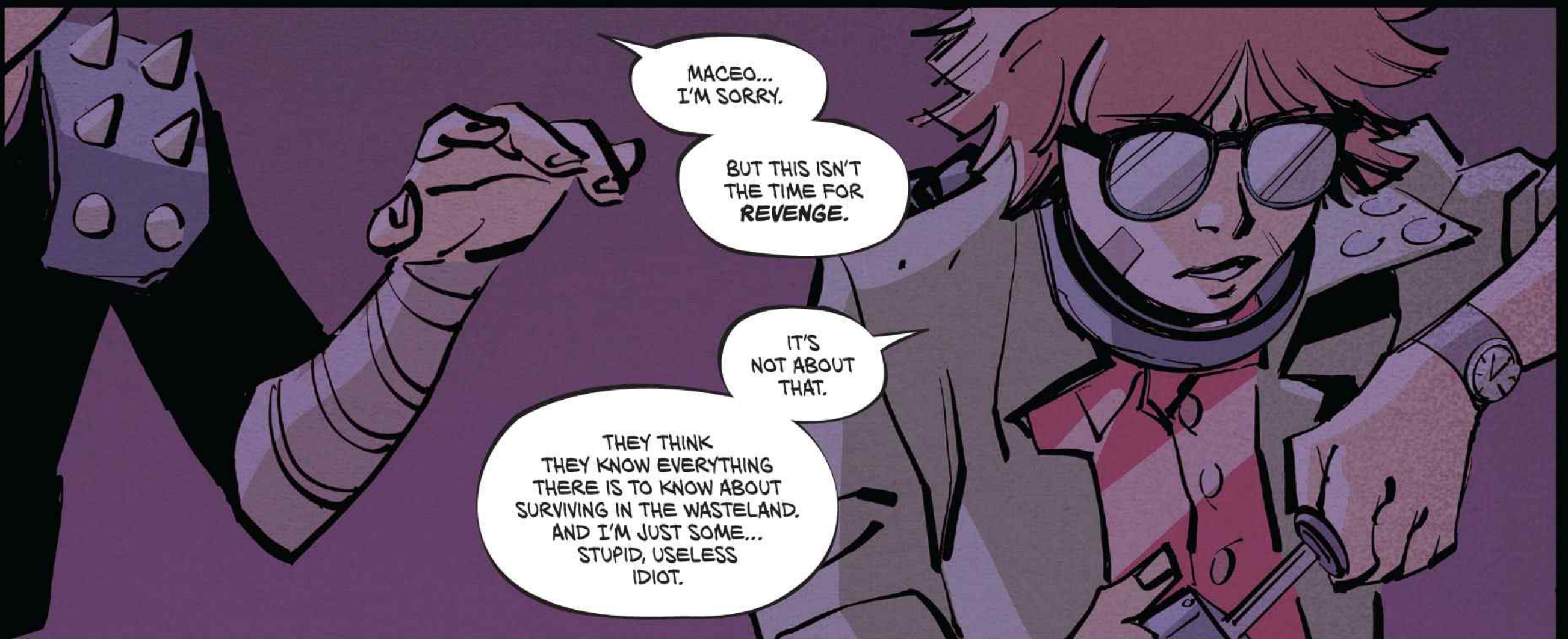
THE RANGERS
WILL SWARM YOU LIKE
HUNGRY RATS AND TAKE
TURNS TEARING YOU TO PIECES.



THEY
BURNED
IT DOWN,
MEZZY.

MY
TOWER.

THEY
BURNED
IT **ALL**.



MACEO...
I'M SORRY.

BUT THIS ISN'T
THE TIME FOR
REVENGE.

IT'S
NOT ABOUT
THAT.

THEY THINK
THEY KNOW EVERYTHING
THERE IS TO KNOW ABOUT
SURVIVING IN THE WASTELAND.
AND I'M JUST SOME...
STUPID, USELESS
IDIOT.



I HAVE TO
SHOW THEM,
MEZZY.

I HAVE
TO SHOW
YOU THAT...
THAT...



WHAT?
SHOW ME
WHAT?

JUST
PLEASE LET
ME WORK.

LET ME
DO THE **ONE**
THING I KNOW
HOW TO DO.





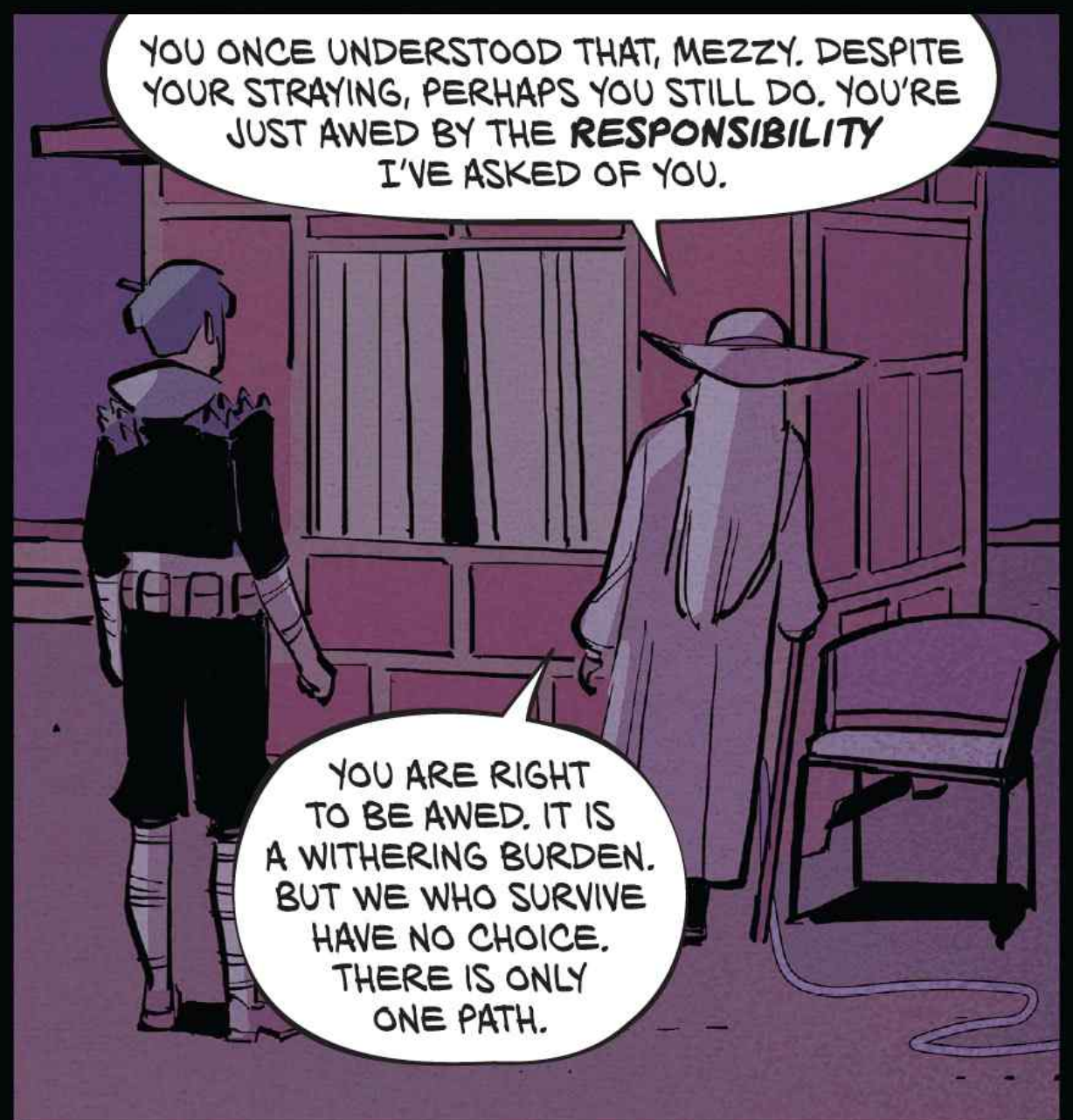


YOU'VE LAID
YOUR HANDS
ON ME FOR THE
LAST TIME,
MAW.



IT'S THE
WASTELAND
THAT IS
CRUEL.

I DO WHAT I
MUST TO PROTECT
MY CHILDREN FROM
A WORLD WHERE THE
WEAK INFECT THE
STRONG.



YOU ONCE UNDERSTOOD THAT, MEZZY. DESPITE
YOUR STRAYING, PERHAPS YOU STILL DO. YOU'RE
JUST AWED BY THE **RESPONSIBILITY**
I'VE ASKED OF YOU.

YOU ARE RIGHT
TO BE AWED. IT IS
A WITHERING BURDEN.
BUT WE WHO SURVIVE
HAVE NO CHOICE.
THERE IS ONLY
ONE PATH.



I HAVE GIVEN MY LIFE TO THE
RANGERS. AND BEFORE I DIE,
I WILL SEE THAT **YOURS** IS
GIVEN AS WELL.

IF YOU
TRULY WISH FOR
YOUR FEEBLEMINDED
COMPANION TO GO
FREE...THEN I WANT
MORE THAN THE
BOOK.

I WANT THE
LOCATION OF THE
OASIS. AND MOST
IMPORTANTLY...



I WANT **YOU**,
EZMERELDA.

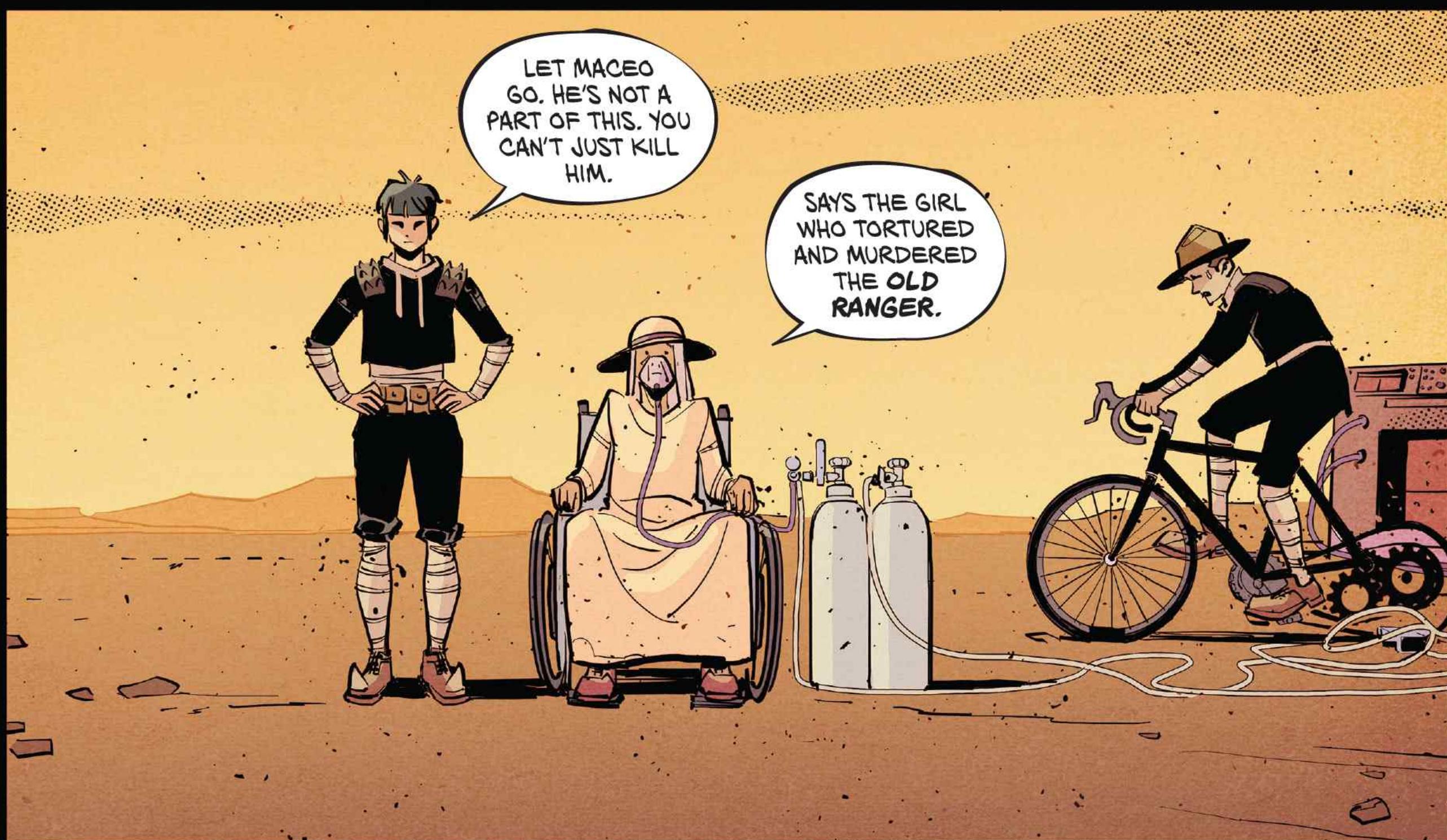
I WANT YOU TO
TAKE MY PLACE. AS
CHIEFTESS OF
THE RANGERS.

AS **MOTHER**
OF THE NEW
WORLD.



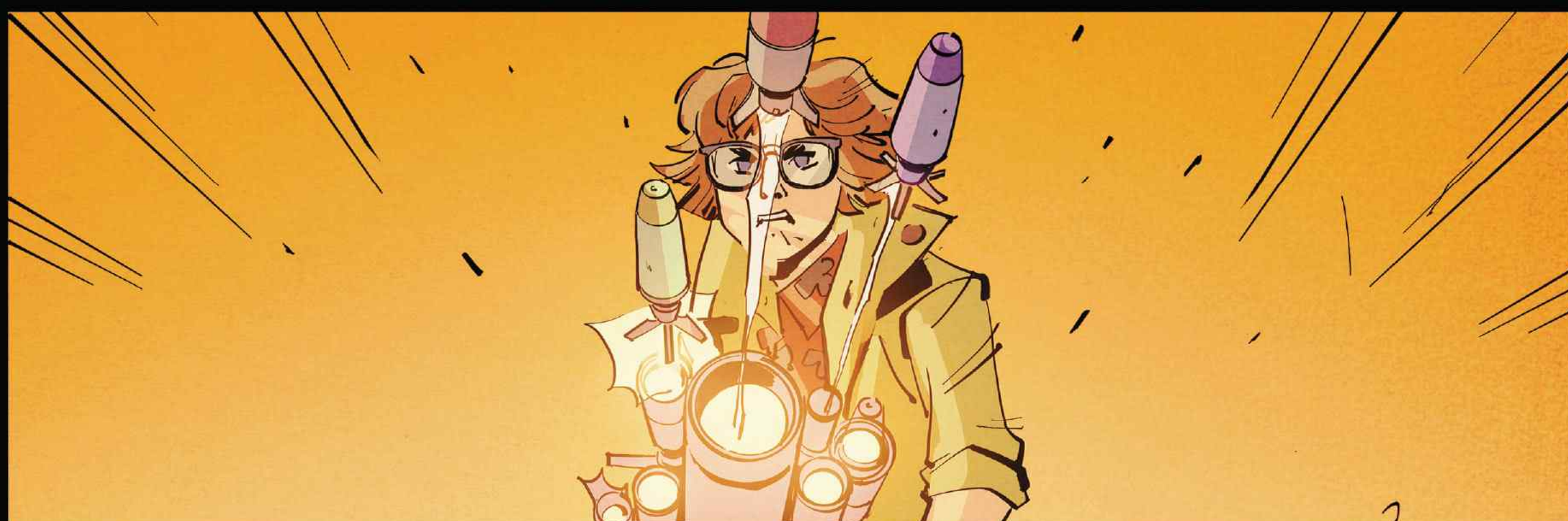
NO
FUCKING
CHANCE IN
SHITTING
HELL.

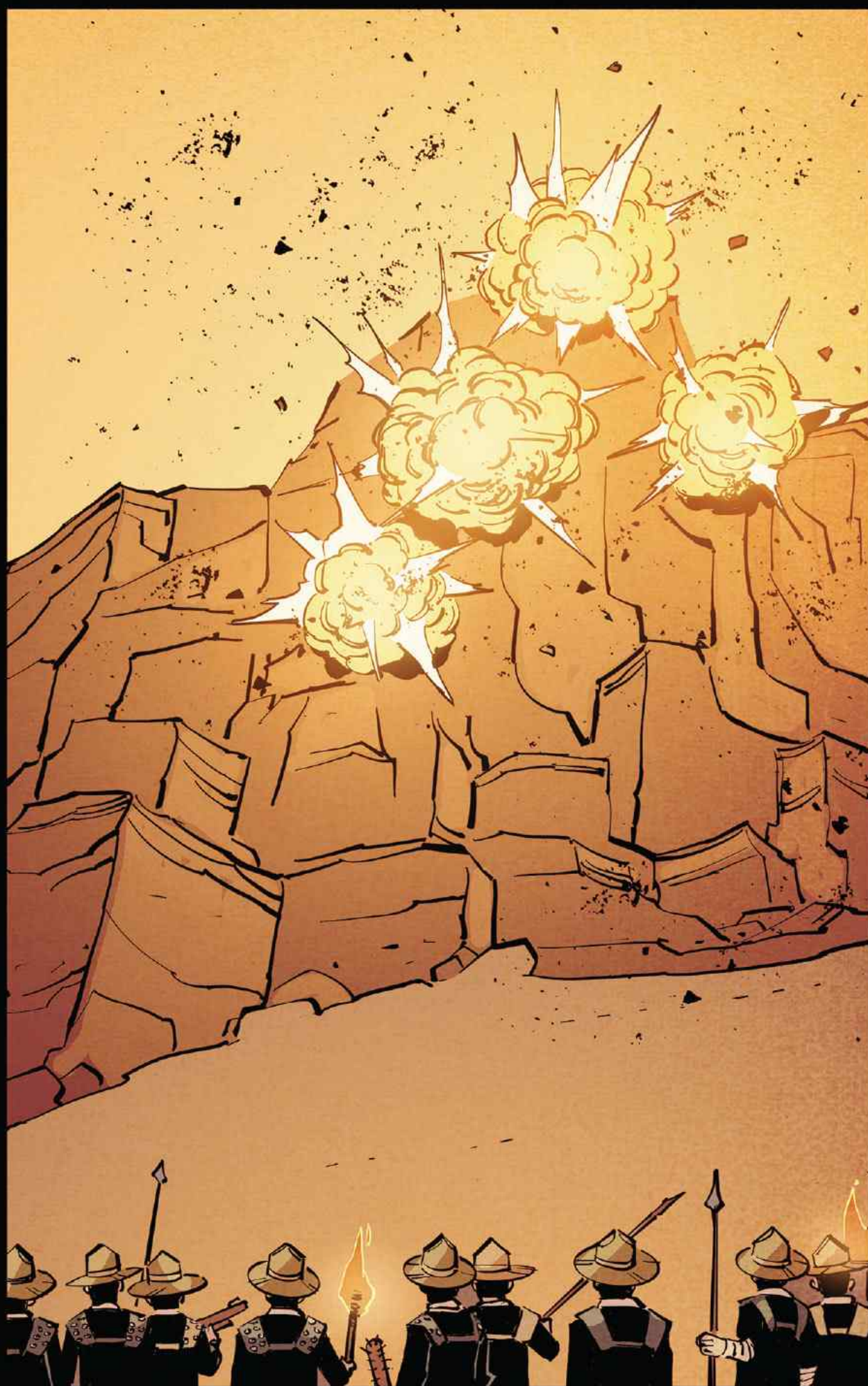
















I'D SAY IT'S MY GREATEST INVENTION YET.



WHAT IS THAT IDIOT CHILD DOING?

HE'S DROPPING HIS WEAPON. HA!

IS THAT... ME?

IS THAT HOW HE SEES ME?



YOU SAID IT WAS A BATTLE TO THE DEATH.

SO I WIN.

BECAUSE IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT YOU GUYS DO TO ME.



WHAT I JUST MADE WILL LAST FOREVER.

AND SO WILL THE FEELINGS BEHIND IT.



MEZZY... I...

I HOPE YOU KNOW THAT I... THAT I THINK YOU'RE...

AND I REALLY... I MEAN, LIKE, A LOT...

I JUST... YEAH...

ALL THAT AND... AND MORE.



HIS WEAPON
IS DOWN!
FINISH HIM,
RANGERS!

BRING
ME HIS WOKE
LITTLE
HEAD!!!



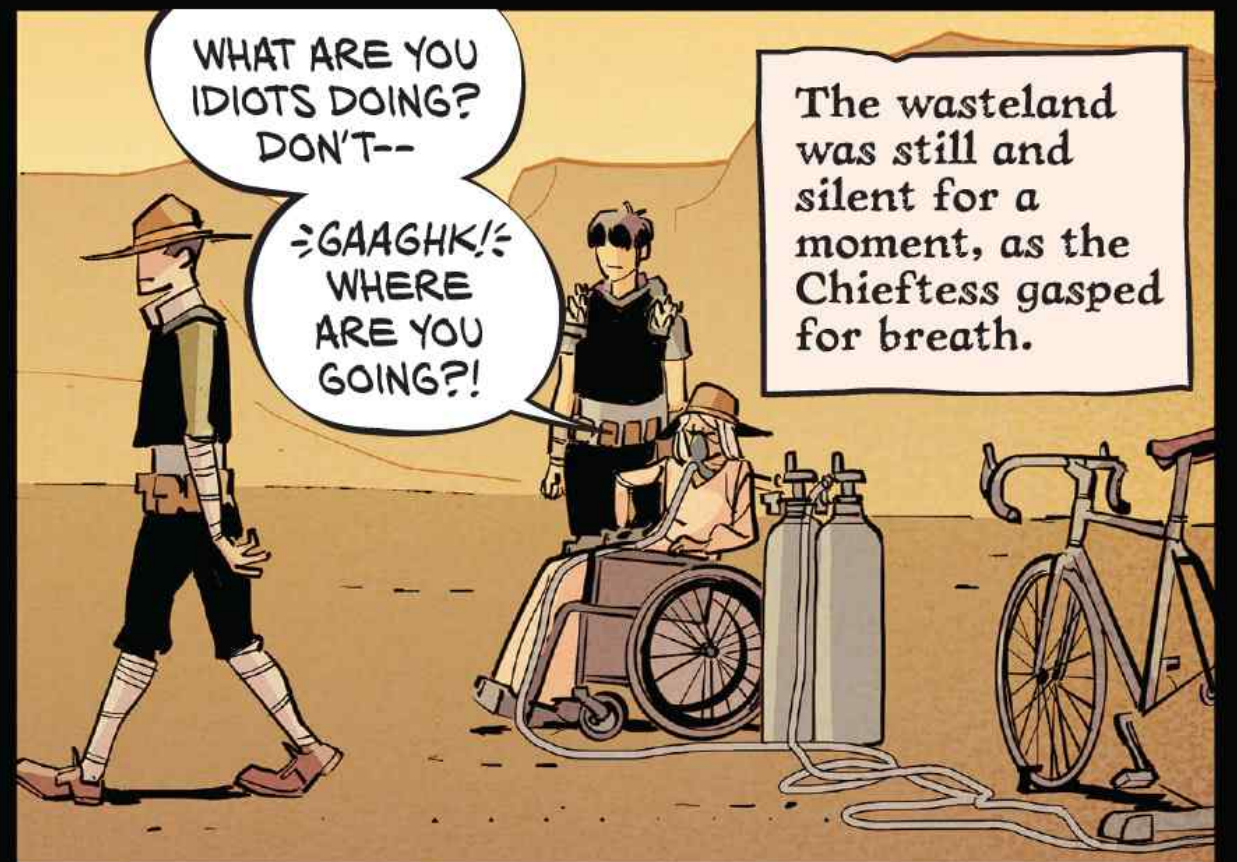
RANGERS?!

IT LOOKS
JUST LIKE
HER. BUT...
HAPPY.

IT'S A...PIECE OF
ROCK. WHY IS A BIG DUMB
ROCK MAKING MY FACE
FEEL FUNNY?

HE CHANGED
THE WASTELAND
INTO SOMETHING...
SOMETHING SO...IS
THERE A WORD
FOR IT?

THE
BEAUTY...THE
BEAUTY.



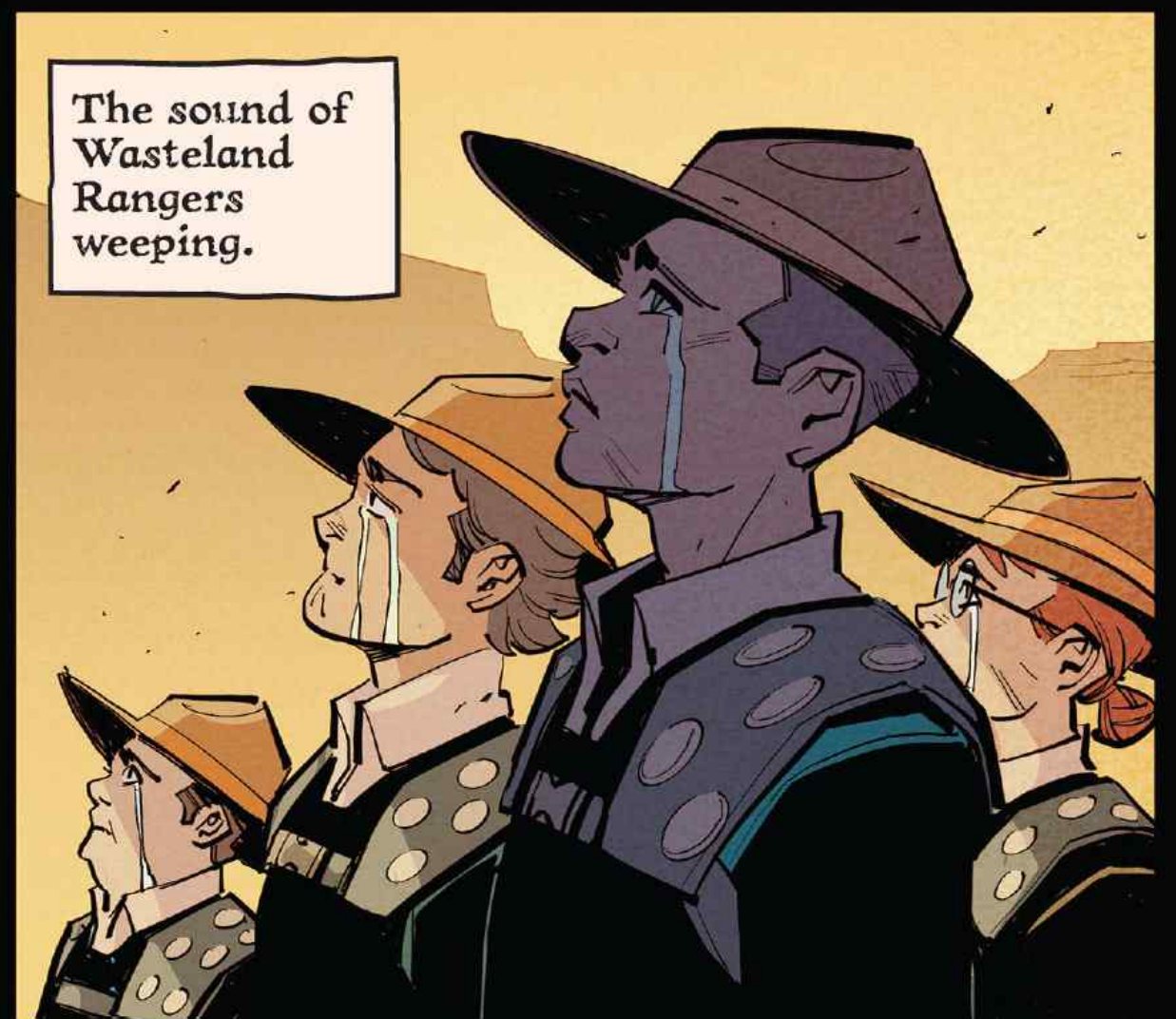
WHAT ARE YOU
IDIOTS DOING?
DON'T--

=GAAGHK!/
WHERE
ARE YOU
GOING?!

The wasteland
was still and
silent for a
moment, as the
Chieftess gasped
for breath.



And then there came a sound that
had never been heard before, most
especially not by those who made it.

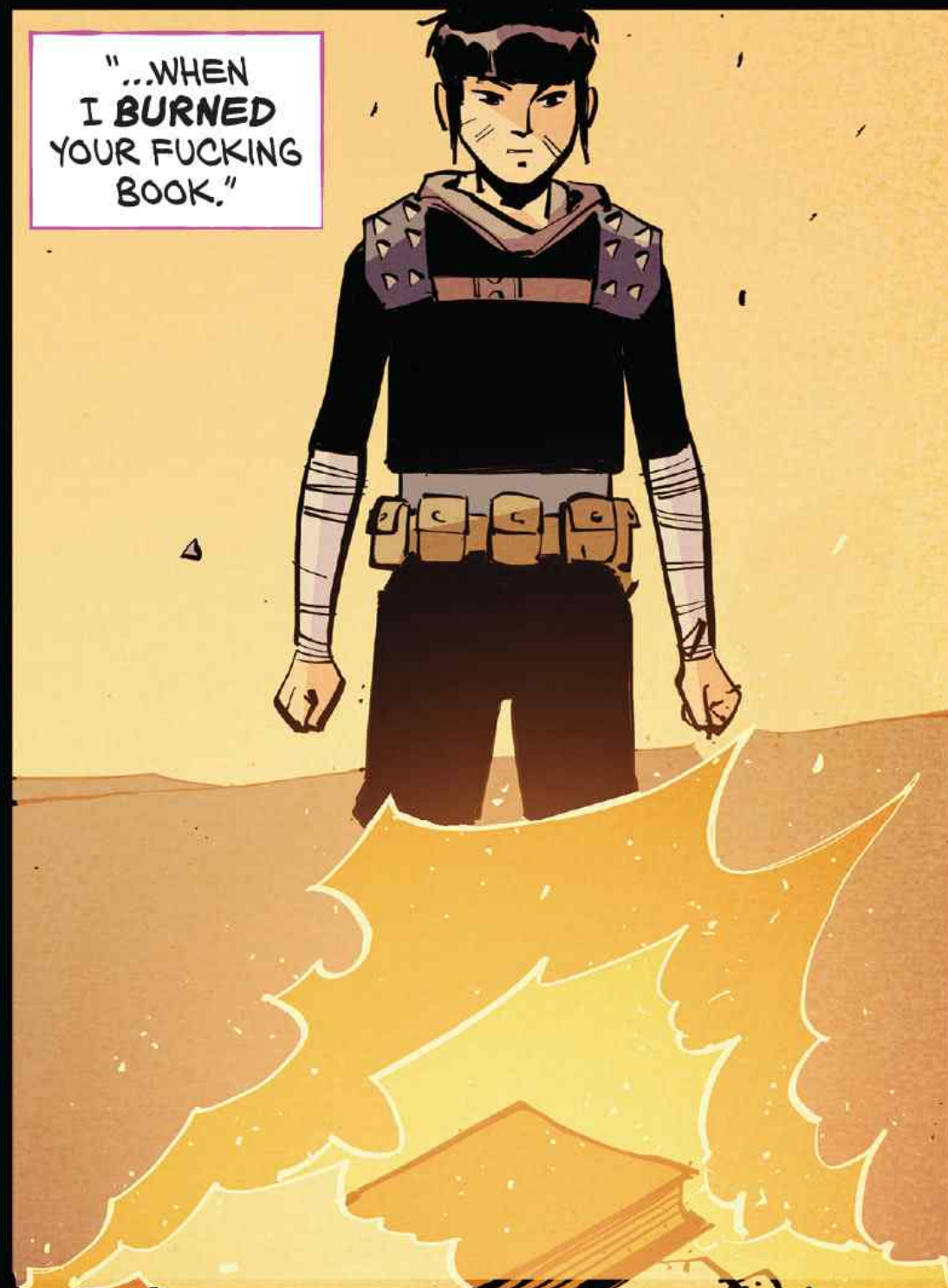
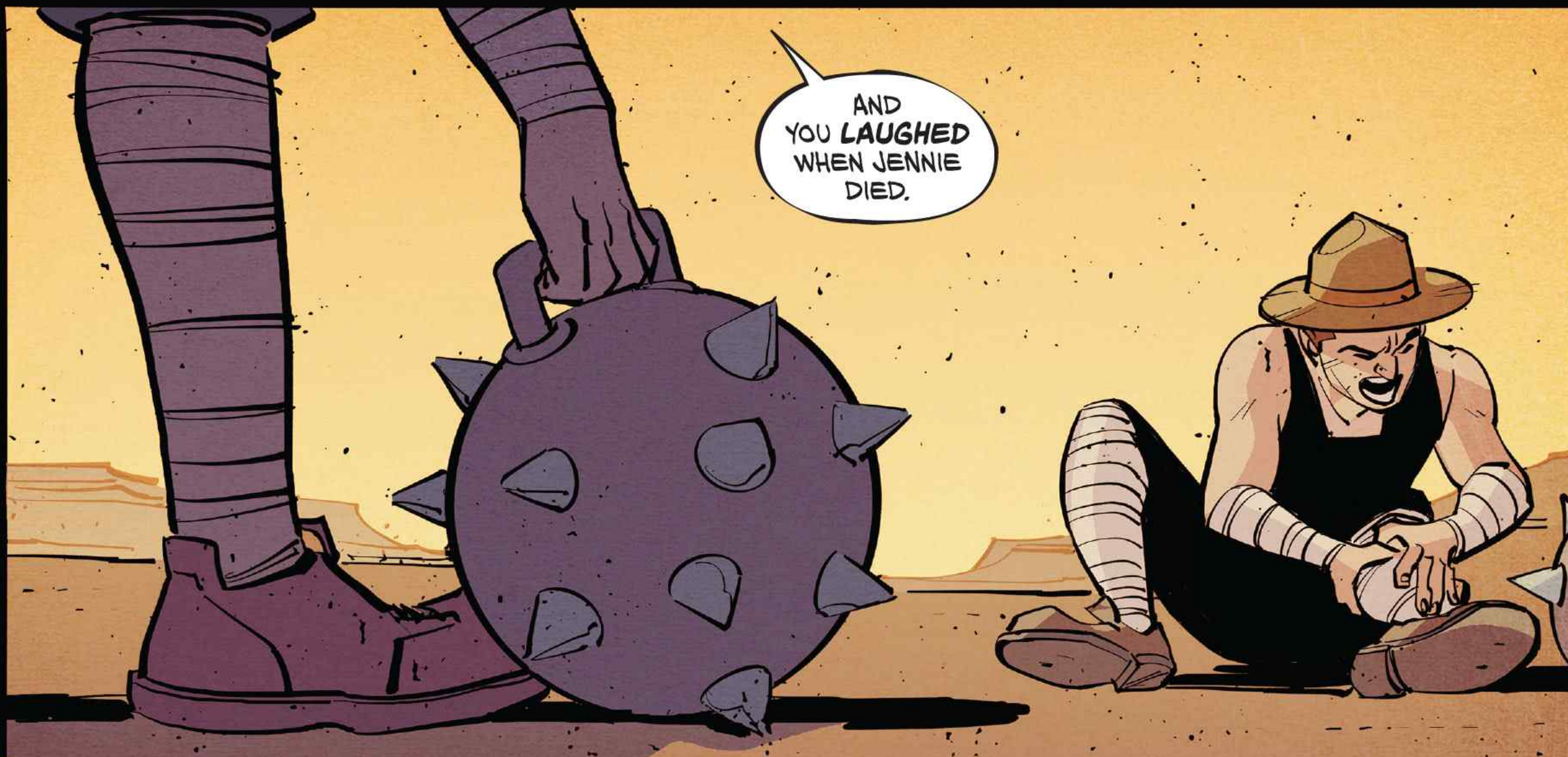


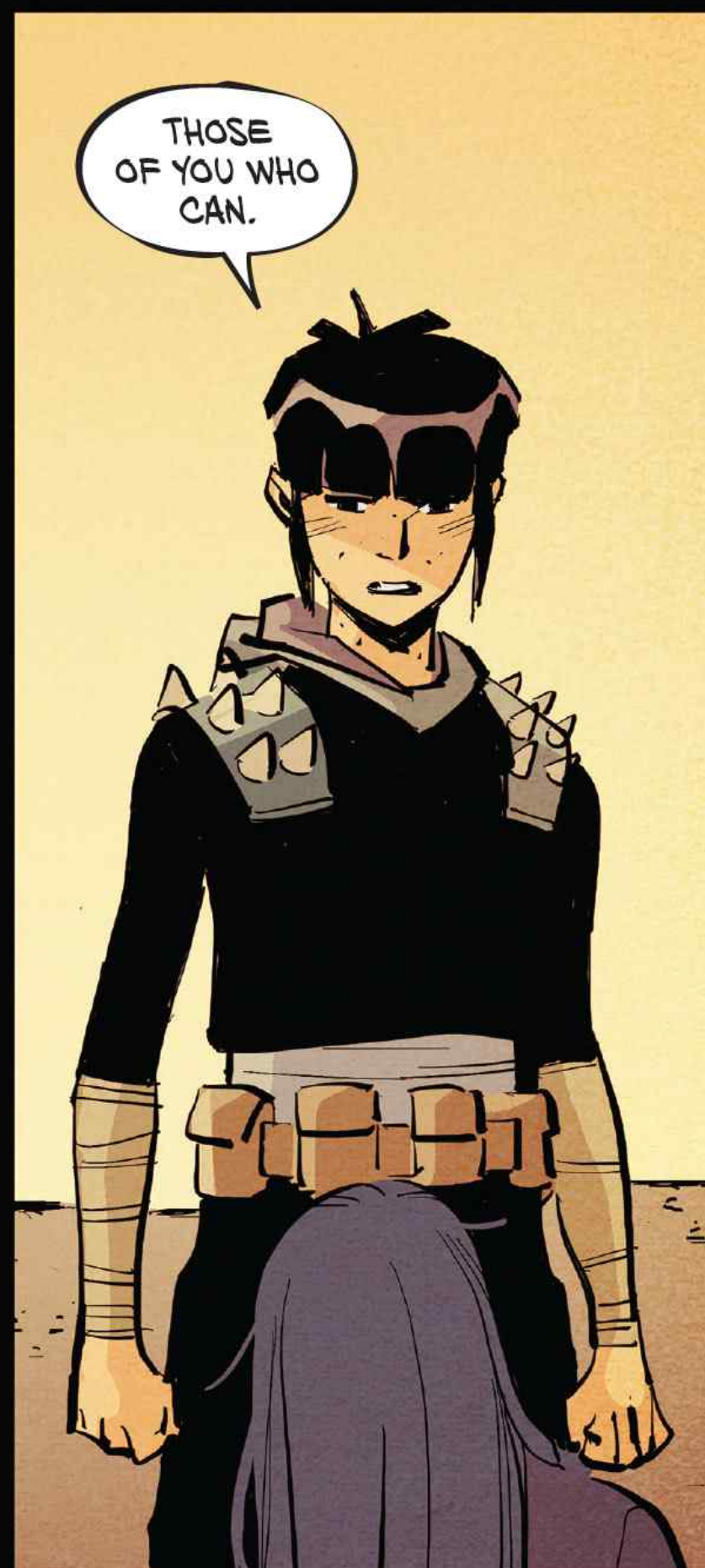
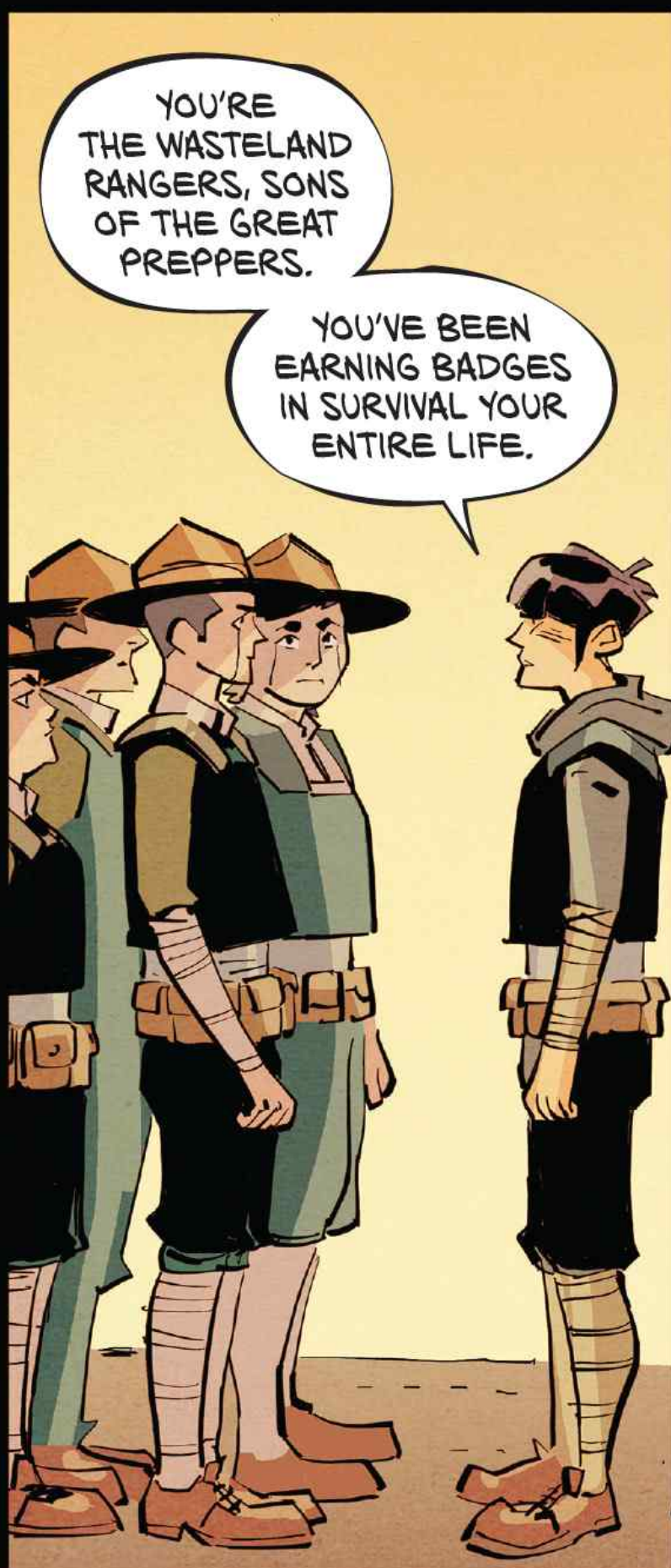
The sound of
Wasteland
Rangers
weeping.

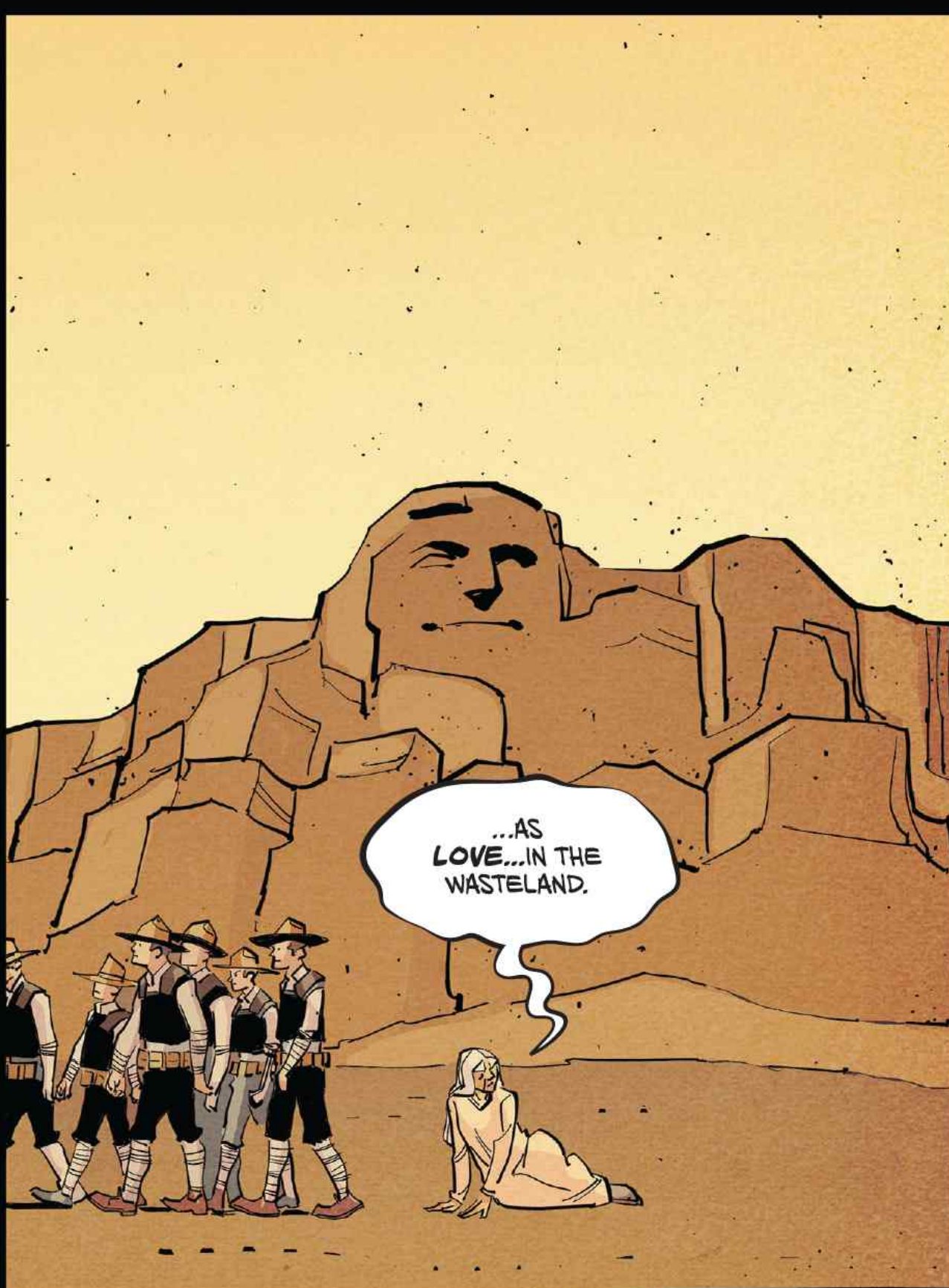


The sound of
victory in the
Apocalypics.

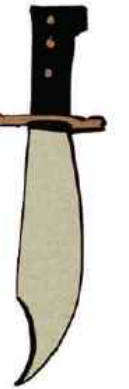
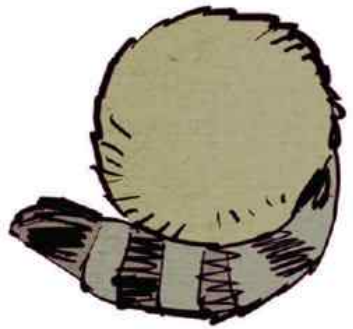
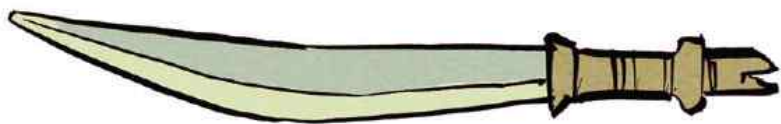
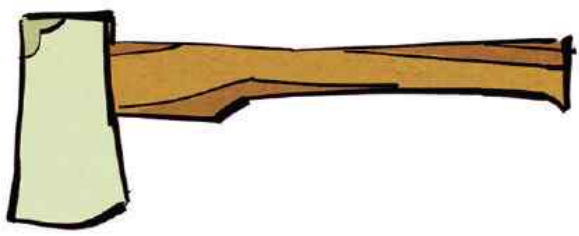
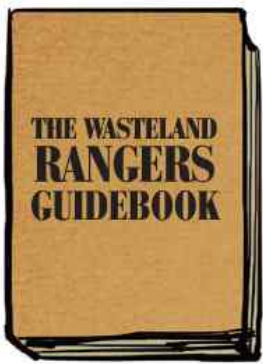




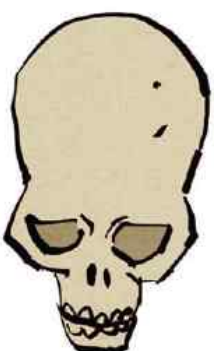
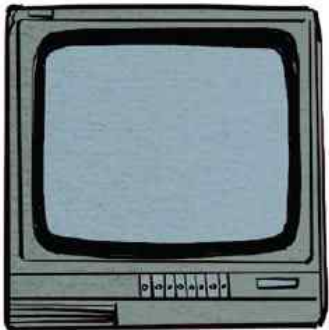






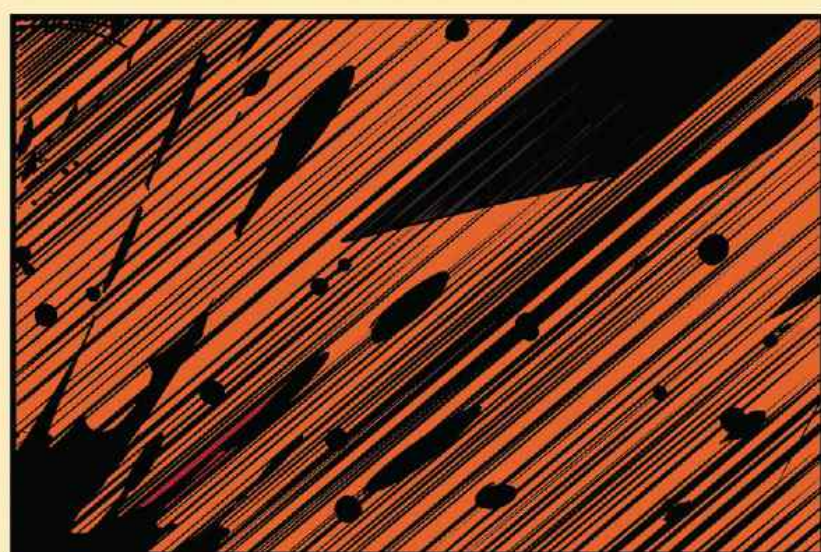
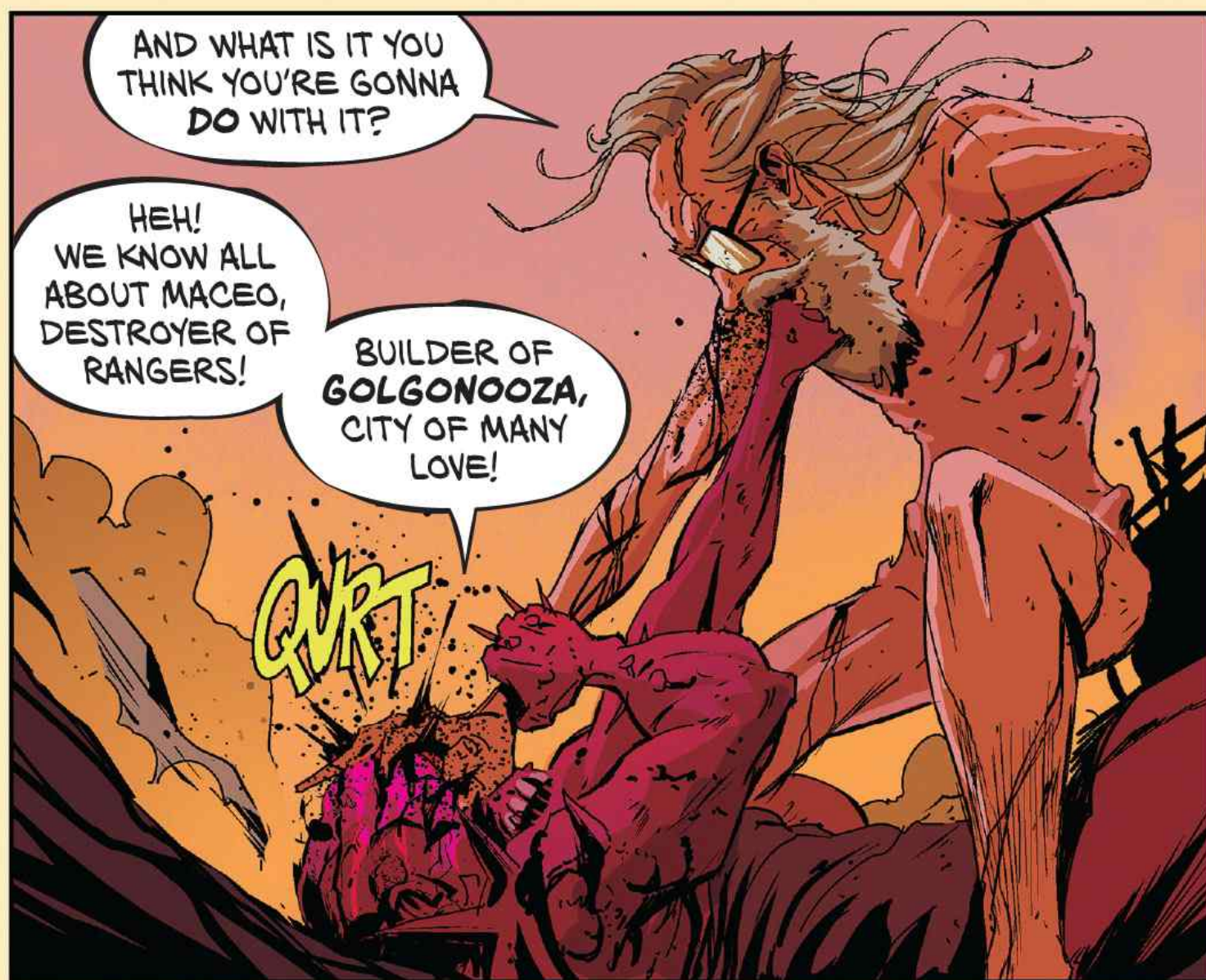


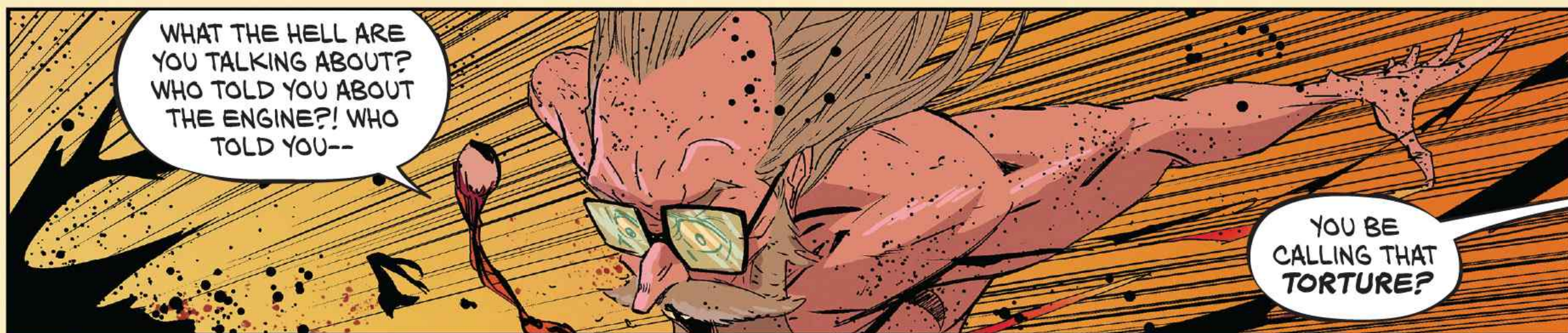
...that words
alone cannot hope
to carry them.



Years later.

AEEEEIRRGGH!





YOU BE CALLING THAT TORTURE?





Once upon a time
at the end of the
world, a girl met a boy,
in a tower in the sea.

GAAARRGGGH!



Together they
braved the wilds
of the wasteland.

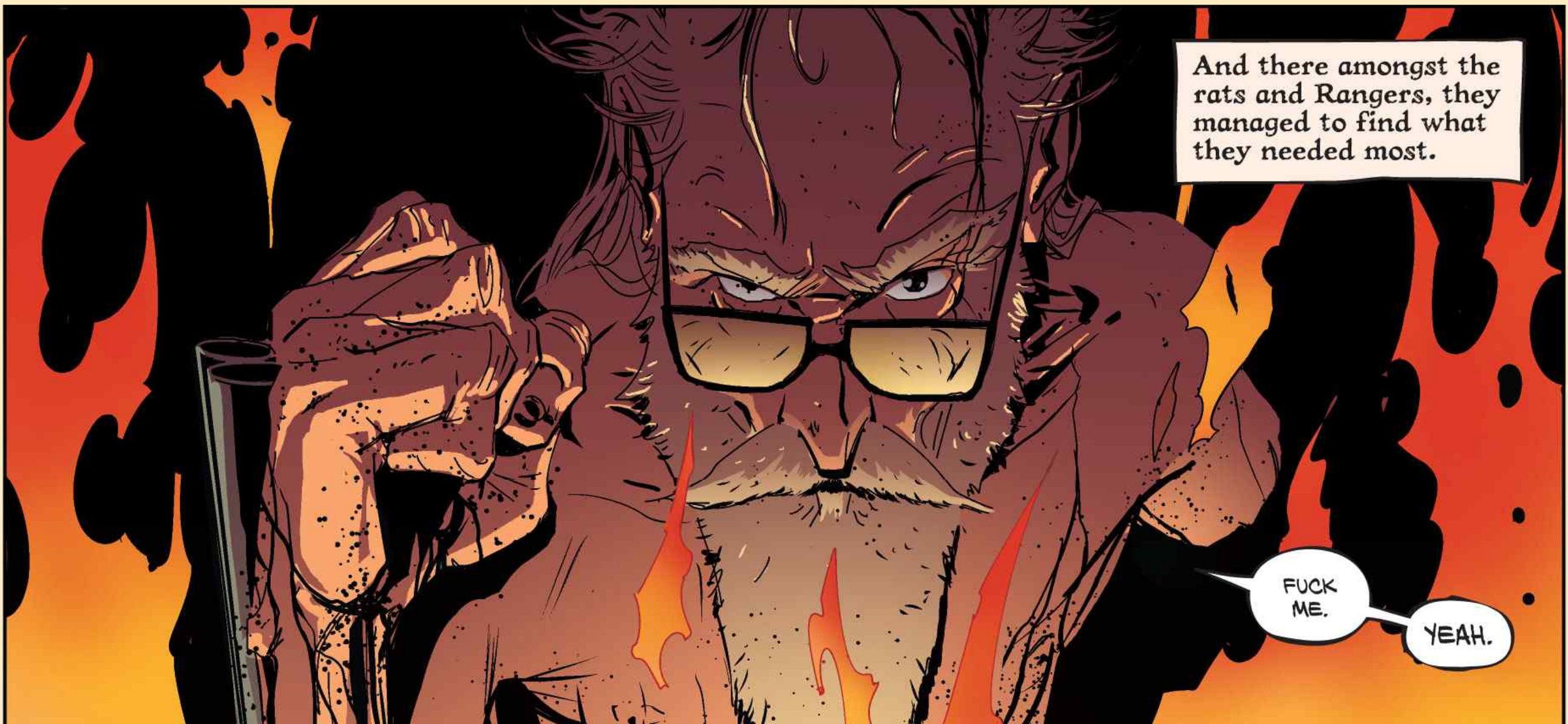
HOLD YOUR
FIRE!



They walked
and endured.
They survived
and danced.

MACEO?
IS THAT
YOU?

THOK



And there amongst the
rats and Rangers, they
managed to find what
they needed most.

FUCK
ME.

YEAH.

They found
each other.

HELLO,
MEZZY.

Next Issue: Book Two Begins.

THE EXPANSE CONTINUES AT BOOM! STUDIOS

Sometimes you get what you want, just not the way you expect.

I wanted more of *The Expanse*, and I wasn't alone. The TV show got me hooked from the start, and between episodes I devoured *Leviathan Wakes*, the first in James SA Corey's Hugo Award-winning novel series from which it was adapted. Waiting for the next season — and the next, and the next — always felt like a hard time. Fortunately I had the books, short stories and novellas to immerse myself in.

Created by James SA Corey — the pen-name of authors Daniel Abraham and Ty Franck — *The Expanse* weaves a vast and sprawling story with multiple viewpoint characters, as the human race struggles to colonise the vast gulf of our solar system. But of course, people are still people. Even 200 years in the future, we're still just apes who throw rocks. It's just that the rocks are bigger. A lot bigger. . .

That kind of scale might not seem to lend itself to the budgetary restraints of the small screen, but they pulled off a miracle — and they didn't dumb it down for TV! How often do we get to say that about award-winning science fiction. . .?

They say all good things must come to an end. . . but they're wrong. After three outstanding seasons, *The Expanse* was cancelled by the SYFY Channel, but fans of *The Expanse* mounted a passionate campaign to get it picked up by another studio — and it worked! Another miracle! We got three more excellent seasons via Amazon. *The Expanse* fans understand that real fans aren't gatekeepers, they're evangelists. We share the love.

While we waited in hope for more, I kept *The Expanse* alive by re-watching the show with my son, playing the RPG (terrible Belter accent and all) live on Twitch, and lining up at New York Comic Con to get my photo taken aboard the Rocinante. I was grateful for what we'd been given, but I still wanted more. . .

... Until, quite out of the blue, BOOM! Studios' Jon Moisan emailed to ask if I'd have any interest in writing a new comic series of *The Expanse*.

I swear, I jumped at the offer so fast, I should have been strapped into a crash couch.

Like I said, sometimes you get what you want, just not the way you expect. I wanted more of *The Expanse*. . . but I never even dared to dream I'd be writing it myself. Now it's real. It's happening. I'm writing these characters I know and love — Holden, Naomi, Amos, Bobbie, Clarissa, Avasarala, Drummer — and you'd better believe I'm grinning while I do it.

The Expanse: Dragon Tooth is a continuation of the TV show's storyline, set soon after the finale of season six. Our first issue is due out in April, and the Kickstarter for exclusive limited-edition collections is currently rocketing towards a million dollars in pledges. The fans pulled off another miracle, and the Rocinante is ready to roll again.

Get on board.

ANDY DIGGLE

WRITER, *THE EXPANSE: DRAGON TOOTH*



NEW GIVEAWAY!

THE ICONIC SCI-FI UNIVERSE OF THE EXPANSE
CONTINUES AT BOOM! STUDIOS!

To celebrate the upcoming launch of **THE EXPANSE: DRAGON TOOTH #1**, we're pulling some of our favorite EXPANSE stories out of the archive for an exclusive BOOM! Direct giveaway package. Scan the QR code for your chance to win and get ready for DRAGON TOOTH on April 5!

SCAN THE QR CODE FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN!



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SON OF ULTRON

"THIS FAN...
THIS MONSTER!"

